MY GIRL

僕も言えなかったから――。
ごめんって、陽子さんに……。

マイガール

佐原ミズ

Pleasure To Live With You...

カバーデザイン　竹内亮輔

BUNCH COMICS
マイガール
佐原ミズ
新潮社

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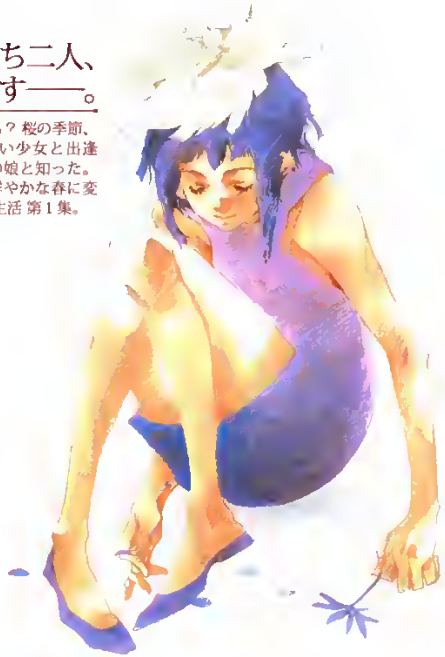
寂しがりの僕たち二人、
親子、始めます――。

笠間正宗・23歳 独身…子持ち？ 桜の季節、最愛の恋人を亡くした。幼い少女と出逢い、恋人が内緒で育てた実の娘と知った。人生最悪の春は、切なくも鮮やかな春に変わった。凸凹親子の優しい新生活 第1集。



MY GIRL

Pleasure To Live With You

MIZU SAHARA

MY GIRL
マイガール
Pleasure To Live With You..
SAHARA MIZU
The 1st Day: Good-bye and Hello

KAZAMA-SAAAN, ARE YOU THERE?
ALREADY WENT TO WORK, HMM...?
THIS WON'T FIT IN HIS BOX...
VROOM...
IT'S ALREADY BEEN THREE YEARS...
SINCE I STOPPED CHECKING THE MAIL.

BZZ
BZZ
BZZ
THE POINT OF PASSING TIME IN THIS COUNTRY TOWN...
SCATTERED WITH FLOWERING FIELDS OF GREENS...
I'VE FORGOTTEN NOW WHAT IT WAS...
VRRM

MY GIRL

Pleasure To Live With You...

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MIYAMOTO STATIONERY
KAZAMA-KUUUN...
WHAP
OW!
That hurt.
I'M NOT GOING TO GO TO A HOSTESS CLUB.
ARE YOU FREE TODAY?
Tch!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH GOING OUT?
WHY NOT?
YOU'RE ONLY 23, RIGHT?
I'VE NEVER SEEN A GUY STAY FIXATED FOR FIVE YEARS ON A GIRL AFTER BEING DUMPED BY
GRP
All right, give it a rest
KAZAMA, DO YOU HAVE A MINUTE?
I DON'T WANT TO BE TOLD THAT BY THE SENPAI WHO ALWAYS GETS HIS PAY FLEECED BY A MONEY-GRUBBING HOSTESS!

AH, HERE IT IS!
OH...?
LISTEN, THE HEAD OF THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT WAS REPLACED,
SO THE BUDGET WE'VE GOT IN THE PLANNING COMMITTEE ISN'T AS TIGHT
SO...
IT WAS DECIDED THAT WE'D TRY OUT SOME PROJECTS THAT WERE SHELVED A WHILE BACK
HERE, LOOK.
IT'S THE LADYBUG MECHANICAL PENCIL YOU CAME UP WITH
IT TOOK QUITE A WHILE, BUT WE'RE GOING TO PRODUCE IT
OH! YES...
HUH? AREN'T YOU HAPPY?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
LIAR!
I CHECKED AT THAT STORE, BUT THEY WEREN'T SELLING IT!
SHE ATTENDED THE AFFILIATED UNIVERSITY... AND THE FIRST TIME I MET HER...
HUH?
THAT!
THAT MECHANICAL PENCIL!
...WAS RIGHT AFTER I STARTED HIGH SCHOOL.

UH... BUT I REALLY DID BUY IT THERE...
NOT LIKE THAT!
THERE WASN'T ONE WITH A LADYBUG!
HUH...? OH, THAT...
I LOST THE CAP, SO...
I MADE IT MYSELF.
I TRIMMED THE ERASER, YOU SEE, SO...
JEEZ! YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD ME EARLIER!
Tch!
UMM... WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO MAKE ONE FOR YOU?
.....
UH... SURE.
WOULD YOU?

YOUKO.
HUH?
I DON'T WANT YOU TO FORGET, SO WRITE IT DOWN.
CLACK
WHAT'S YOURS?
TSUKA-MOTO YOUKO. THAT'S MY NAME.
BACK THEN...
KAZAMA MASAMUNE.
I NEVER WOULD'VE THOUGHT...
KAZA-MA...

THAT I REALLY STOOD A CHANCE WITH HER, SINCE SHE WAS FOUR YEARS MY SENIOR
KAZAMA-SAAAN
THERE'S A CALL FOR YOU ON LINE THREE
OH OKAY WHO IS IT?
UMM IT'S THE MOTHER OF SOMEONE CALLED TSUKAMOTO YOUKO
TSUKAMOTO YOUKO-?
DO YOU KNOW HER?

SNUFF
SNUFF
WAS IT AN ILLNESS?
OR A SUDDEN ACCIDENT?
TSUKAMOTO
SHE WAS SO YOUNG
SHE WAS WORKING SO HARD ALL BY HERSELF STUDYING ABROAD AT THAT UNIVERSITY, RIGHT?
SNUFF
SNUFF
SNUFF
I'VE DECIDED TO GO STUDY ABROAD.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR ME.
EH?
BUT...
WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHEN I'LL COME BACK,
AND I MIGHT DECIDE TO GET A JOB THERE...
AND IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR YOU TO BE FREE FROM NOW ON
BUT...
.....
I'LL WAIT...

EVEN IF WE'RE NEAR EACH OTHER, WE MIGHT DOUBT EACH OTHER OR FIGHT...
Oomph!
I HATE THAT SORT OF THING
THE MORE DISTANT WE ARE, THE MORE LIKELY IT IS TO HAPPEN
Yay, all done!
STILL
...I'LL WAIT FOR YOU.
IT'S POINT-LESS.
I DON'T THINK IT'LL WORK.
EVEN SO...
I'LL WAIT.

MY HAND...
IT'S COLD.
?
YOUR HAND?
Because I was making a snowman...
Dammit!
I'M NOT GOING TO SAY "WARM ME UP~♡" OR ANYTHING.
I'LL...
WAIT...

I'LL ALWAYS...
BE WAITING..
FOR YOU, YOUKO-SAN, SO...

KAZAMA SAN?
CLACK...
AH
IT IS YOU
I'M SORRY I DIDN'T KEEP IN CONTACT, MA'AM
FROM NOW ON
NOT AT ALL
I'M GLAD YOU CAME
NO
I'M SURE I'VE CAUSED YOU DESPAIR. SO I DON'T KNOW WHETHER OR NOT I SHOULD HAVE COME
ABOUT THAT...
TO TELL THE TRUTH...
YOUKO
SHE HAS
A DAUGHTER, WHO'S ALMOST FIVE

THAT WAS...
STILL...
FIVE YEARS OLD...?
THAT MEANS...
I SEE...
DAUGHTER...?
...THAT...
I HAD ALREADY ...
BACK THEN...
BEEN DUMPED, HADN'T I...
THAT POOR, POOR CHILD...

WELL...
WHAT I MEAN, IS...
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL YOU THIS SO SUDDENLY
BUT ACCORDING TO YOUKO WELL...

SHE SAID THE FATHER WAS...
WHAT...?
EVERY DAY...
...YOU, KAZAMA-SAN.
...WROTE HER A LETTER PRACTICALLY EVERY DAY.

BUT...
I NEVER RECEIVED A RESPONSE IN MY MAILBOX
I WOULD ENCLOSE THEM WITH THE LETTER, AND I KEPT ON SENDING THEM, LIKE A FOOL.
ANY SMALL LADYBUG ITEMS I FOUND,
"SHE'S PROBABLY JUST BUSY."
COMING UP WITH VARIOUS REASONS LIKE,
FOR TWO YEARS, I CONSOLED MYSELF,
FROM THE TEACHERS' GOSSIP, I DISCOVERED THAT SHE HAD FOUND WORK ABROAD.
WHEN I HEARD THAT REASON FOR HER SO BRUSQUELY CUTTING OFF CONTACT WITH ME...
SOME PART OF MY HEART WAS SET AT EASE.
THAT WAS THE SPRING OF THE THIRD YEAR

I KNOW THAT WITHOUT YOU TELLING ME.
YOU'RE DEFINITELY BEING USED.
YES
THAT'S WHY I SAID IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE, TOO.
AND GAVE YOUR NAME TO HER PARENTS AS AN EXCUSE?
DOESN'T IT SOUND LIKE SHE CARELESSLY GOT PREGNANT STUDYING ABROAD...
I MEAN, A WHOLE FIVE YEARS WITHOUT ANY NEWS FROM HER, AND SUDDENLY THERE'S A KID?
PLEASE DON'T MOCK ME...
IF THAT WERE TRUE... WOULDN'T YOU NORMALLY CONTACT SOMEONE... ABOUT SOMETHING THIS IMPORTANT?
OH!
PLEASE TELL THE DIVISION HEAD THAT I HAVE TO TALK WITH THE PEOPLE IN SALES, SO YOU CAN GO HOME ONCE YOU'RE DONE.
I SHOUTED THAT AND WENT HOME
HMM... YOU'VE GOT IT PRETTY ROUGH, TOO.

ALRIGHTY!
OH! KAZAMA-SAN...
ABOUT YOUR LADYBUG PRODUCT
THE PRODUCT TESTERS' REACTION WAS GREAT...
OH REALLY...
That one
PLEASE CREATE ANOTHER LADYBUG PRODUCT, OKAY?
ALL RIGHT...
THE PERSON I ALWAYS WANTED TO SHOW IT TO
Good work
Please take care of this
No sure thing
DIED THE MOMENT THAT IT FINALLY STARTED GOING WELL...
THE WORLD JUST ISN'T FAIR
SHICE
SOB
?
IS SOMEONE CRYING?
?

That hurt
?
WHERE IS IT COMING FROM...
SHICK
WHACK
OW!
WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING!? GET DOWN FROM THERE, IT'S DANGEROUS!
HEY!
BUT IT GOT STUCK UP THERE

Ack!
WHAT ON EARTH AM I DOING...
MY SPECIAL STRING TELEPHONE
SIGH...
THE STRING CAME OUT
WHAT? DON'T TELL ME IT'S BROKEN?
IF THAT'S ALL, IT'S FINE
CAN I SEE IT FOR A MOMENT?
...CAN YOU FIX IT?

H-
HELLO?
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
HI THERE
UH...
UMM...
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
I'M KOHARU
AH, I SEE KOHARU-CHAN...
DID ANYTHING GOOD HAPPEN TODAY, KOHARU-CHAN?
UH...
WELL, THEN...
DID ANYTHING GOOD HAPPEN YESTERDAY?
HOW ABOUT RIGHT NOW, WITH ME...?
ER WELL...
HOW TO SAY THIS...

GIGGLE
THAT'S A STRANGE QUESTION.
YEAH, I GUESS SO...
I CAME TODAY TO GIVE SOMEONE A PRESENT FROM MY MAMA
REALLY? THAT'S A BIG RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOMEONE SO LITTLE
I SEE
BUT I CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY AND NOT BE ABLE TO SAY IT
.....
NO. THAT'S NOT IT. IT'S A SECRET. BUT...
MY MAMA IS A WIMP
THAT'S WHY I CAME IN HER PLACE
SHE ALWAYS HID THINGS SHE WANTED TO SAY SO I MADE HER A STRING TELEPHONE SO SHE COULD SAY IT SECRETLY
BUT IN THE END, I COULDN'T GIVE IT TO HER

ACTUALLY, I'M UPSET THAT I COULDN'T SAY WHAT I WANTED TO SAY, TOO...
THAT'S NOT GOOD! YOU HAVE TO SAY IT!
OR YOU'LL END UP JUST LIKE MAMA!

PHEW! I'M GLAD YOU HAVEN'T GONE HOME YET
!
KAZUMA-SAAAN!
IT'S THE FEEDBACK ON THE LADYBUG PIECE
I FORGOT TO GIVE IT TO YOU
OH... YOU COULD'VE WAITED UNTIL TOMORROW...
THANK YOU
SHE WAS CRYING OVER THERE EARLIER
AH...
I THOUGHT SHE WAS YOURS, KAZAMA-SAN
OH! I WAS SURPRISED!
OH? IS THIS CHILD...
...LADY-BUG?
KAZA... MA?
KAZAMA MASAMUNE?
EH...

I...
?
UH YEAH I AM, BUT...?
I...
I...I FOUND YOU!
LADYBUG MASAMUNE-KUN!
WHA...
HERE, IT'S FOR YOU.
FROM MY MAMA.
The 1st Day: FIN

To: masamune-kun
From: Youko

DON'T TELL ME THIS GIRL IS...
YOUKO
YOUKO-SAN'S DAUGHTER....!?

WHAT, YOU STILL HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT HER?
SHE'S LONG SINCE FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOU.
EVEN IF I MADE A SHOW OF KNOWING THAT,
IN MY HEART OF HEARTS, I WAS TOO SCARED TO GO SEE IF IT WAS TRUE
IF I HAD DONE AS EVERYONE TOLD ME TO, AND JUST FORGOTTEN HER,
WOULD I HAVE BEEN ABLE...

TURN
...TO RESPOND TO THIS BETRAYAL WITH A SMILE?
HELLO, KAZAMA SPEAKING
!
Kazama-san?
Well this is Tsukamoto again. Youko's mother...
OH...
UMM...
I'm terribly sorry for being so inconsiderate before...
And about Kohoru...
That's the name of Youko's daughter that I told you about before.
!
She well, she vanished off somewhere...
Perhaps she went to see you...
I couldn't explain the situation to her very well...
She still thinks you're her father, so...

.....
I.. DON'T WANT TO GO HOME YET
BEEP
WHO WAS ON THE PHONE?
IT WAS YOUR GRANDMA
ALL RIGHT, THEN. I'LL SEE YOU SOON
YES
OKAY
YOUR GRAND-MOTHER IS WORRIED
YOU HAVE TO
AND I HAVE TO GO HOME MYSELF..
SHE'LL COME TO GET YOU SOON
MASAMUNE-KUN...
DO YOU HATE ME?

IT'S IT'S NOT A MATTER OF HATING YOU OR ANYTHING...
WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH EACH OTHER.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU HEARD FROM YOUKO-SAN, BUT
WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY, IS
...EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING...
EH..
TEAR
WAI— HOLD ON...
RIP
!
SMACK

WHAT WAS.
OWW...
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW!
WAIT A-
AH...
JEEZ...
WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT?
FLIP
Tokamoto Yuka
To Kazuna Nagamune
?
WHAT'S THIS? LOOKS PRETTY OLD.. A LETTER?

WH-
WHAT ARE THESE?
LETTERS FROM YOUKO-SAN?
AD-DRESSED TO ME?
To Kazama Mariatemo
ALL...
OF THEM?
WHY...?
WHAT ON EARTH IS THIS...?
To Kazama Yuki
Takizawa to Yuki

KOHARU-CHAAAN!
whereee wheree
WHERE DID SHE GO...?
How are you? Thanks for all of the letters, Masamune-kun...

I decided that I wouldnt ever tell you
When I was told I would have Koharu, I was really happy, but
The reason I decided to go abroad
CONGRATULATIONS!
YOU'RE TWO MONTHS ALONG...
It wasnt really because I wanted to study abroad, or because there was something I really wanted to do or anything.
Because I know that when I was in high school, I thought the future was full of so many things I wanted to see...
If you knew, you would choose to limit your future for my sake, wouldnt you?
But you're such a responsible person...

So I won't tell you...
If you're worried about me, don't lie.
I'm perfectly fine...
I'll secretly hide away all my replies to your letters...
I'm perfectly fine.
That's a lie.
very scared.
I don't have the slightest bit of confidence.
wheeze
wheeze
wheeze
Truthfully... I'm actually

I'm lonely Masamune-kun
So lonely
EVEN THOUGH I KNEW...
EVEN THOUGH I KNEW BETTER THAN ANYONE...
THAT YOU LOVED LADYBUGS,
AND HOW VERY MUCH...
YOU THOUGHT ABOUT ME...
AND ABSOLUTELY HATED LOSING
CLENCH

FLAP
AH...
WHICH ONE OF US WAS THE CRUEL ONE?
I THOUGHT I HAD BEEN CAST ASIDE,
AND SELFISHLY DREW BACK AND GREW TIMID...
EVEN THOUGH...
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN PERFECTLY WELL..
HOW HARD IT MUST HAVE BEEN...
ALL ON YOUR OWN...
I CAN'T EVEN APOLOGISE...
I love you, Masamune-kun
I still...

RUSTLE
!
SEE HER AGAIN...
Love you
I CAN'T...
KO-
KOHARU-CHAN!?

KO-
KOHARU-CHAN?
KOHARU-CHAN!?
S-SO THIS IS WHERE YOU WERE... THANK GOD...
S-SORRY I...
UMM...

EVERYONE SAYS TO FORGET...

I WAS REALLY SAD...
AND I CRIED A LOT...
BUT...
IT WAS A VERY BAD ACCIDENT, SO...
THEY SAY I SHOULD JUST FORGET IT QUICKLY
I DON'T THINK I WANT TO FORGET MAMA
HURRY UP AND FORGET HER, KAZAMA...
SHE'S ALREADY...
FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOU.
I WANTED TO MEET YOU, MASAMUNE-KUN...
BECAUSE YOU KNOW HOW TO LIVE WITHOUT MAMA, DON'T YOU?

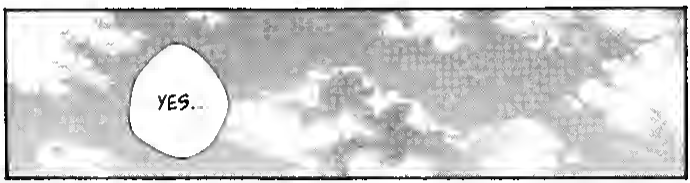
MASAMUNE-KUN, YOU WEREN'T LONELY WITHOUT MAMA?
DO YOU HATE HER NOW?
DID YOU...
FORGET ABOUT MAMA?
I WANT TO LIVE HERE SOMEDAY.

SO MASAMUNE-KUN,
THAT'S FINE. I WANT TO LIVE HERE.
EHH?
IT'S NOTHING BUT FIELDS, THOUGH, ISN'T IT?
SOMEDAY, LET'S LIVE HERE TOGETHER.
I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT MOVING COUNTLESS TIMES, BUT
I NEVER COULD
IT'S SURROUNDED BY NOTHING BUT FIELDS
IT'S TWENTY MINUTES FROM A TWENTY-YEAR-OLD TRAIN STATION
IT'S NOT A GREAT PLACE
MY HOUSE ISN'T FAR FROM HERE

IT WAS LONELY, EVERY DAY...
JUST ONE WORD..
JUST HEARING ONE WORD FROM HER... MADE ME HAPPY...
LONELY, AND PAINFUL..
SO MUCH SO THAT THERE WERE SO MANY TIMES THAT I JUST
WANTED TO FORGET..
I.. I..
WANT TO BE WITH THE PERSON WHO LOVED MAMA

I... I DON'T...
KNOW HOW TO LIVE...
WITHOUT YOUKO-SAN...
THE KIND OF DAYS YOU'LL BE LIVING FROM NOW ON...
BUT...
THOSE I DO KNOW.

I'M NOT COMPLETELY POSITIVE I CAN, BUT...
I
IF YOU HAVE THE SAME FEELINGS...
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU THE HELF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR...
D-
DO YOU WANT...
...TO TRY LIVING TOGETHER?



The 2nd Day:FIN

The 3rd Day: How to Spend a Day

THIS IS MY DAY
I WAKE UP AT AN EASYGOING 8 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING
AND WORK LEISURELY AT THE COMPANY UNTIL 6 IN THE EVENING
AND TO PASS TIME UNTIL I TURN IN FOR THE NIGHT
tug
I WATCH BASEBALL ON TV WITH A BEER IN ONE HAND
MASAMUNE-KUUUN!
tug
UNTIL JUST YESTERDAY
THAT'S HOW I SPENT THE DAY
HELLO

ABOUT KOHARU-CHAN...
IT'S A BIT FAR,
BUT I'VE JUST FOUND A KINDER-GARTEN THAT PROVIDES LUNCH,
AND THERE'S DAY-CARE FOR TWO-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS RIGHT NEXT DOOR, SO SHE CAN STAY THERE FOR A WHILE...
I... I SEE...
BUT I WONDER IF IT WILL BE ALL RIGHT...
I... I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT HER, BUT UH...
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
THE ONE I'M WORRIED ABOUT IS YOU, KAZAMA-SAN...
EH...?
I CAN SEE THAT THIS IS QUITE A BURDEN FOR YOU
YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUSH YOURSELF THIS HARD...
THAT IS.
IF IT'S BECAUSE YOU FEEL GUILTY TOWARDS YOUKO, PLEASE JUST VALUE YOUR OWN TIME
I...
I'VE NEVER TAKEN MUCH CARE WITH HOW I PASS MY DAYS...
AND BESIDES...

NOW I'M REALLY GLAD...
...THAT SHE WAS THERE FOR ME.
THE ONE WHO WAS BEING SUPPORTED MIGHT HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN ME
WELL THEN,
I'LL TAKE CARE OF HER FROM NOW ON
ALL RIGHT.
IT MAY BE DIFFICULT, BUT PLEASE TAKE CARE OF HER.
KOHARU-CHAN, GREET HIM PROPERLY
"THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF ME."
FROM NOW ON,
THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF ME.

WHO RAISED HER ALL ON HER OWN FOR FIVE YEARS...
KYA HAHA!
FOR YOUKO-SAN
I LOOK FORWARD TO SPENDING TIME WITH YOU
Y-YES, SAME HERE
AND FOR THIS GIRL, WHO SAID THAT SHE WANTED TO LIVE WITH ME
FAST, FAST!
I
Yay!
I HAVE TO DO MY BEST...
Whee!
VR
OOM

BRR
ING
NEW
THIS IS MY DAY
AFTER MAKING BREAK-FAST
Uhh
Umm
Delicious Breakfasts
NNNGH
I'LL WAKE UP KOHARU-CHAN
I SOMEHOW GET UP AT SEVEN IN THE MORNING
Cant drop her off looking like this
First, get dressed
GOOD MORNING MASAMUNE-KUN!

G-GOOD MORNING
YOU WERE ALREADY UP, KOHAKU-CHAN?
YEAH.
OH, REALLY? WELL, THEN, FIRST OF ALL, LET'S HAVE BREAKFAST
OKAY
UH, IT'S A BIT SMALL HERE, BUT JUST BEAR WITH IT UNTIL NEXT MONTH, OKAY?
WE'LL MOVE TO A BIGGER PLACE ON THE FIRST FLOOR THEN
AFTER EATING BREAKFAST, I FINISH GETTING DRESSED—
AND LEAVE HOME AT 8:30
WELL, THIS ISN'T TOO BAD AT ALL
TUG
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GO
HUH...?
CAN YOU BRAID MY HAIR?

I_I CAN'T LET THIS BEAT ME..
09 : 21 AM
KINDER-GARTEN ENDS AT THREE.
BUT I WON'T COME AND GET YOU UNTIL SIX
SO GO OVER TO PLAY WITH THE LADY AT DAY-CARE IN THE BUILDING NEXT DOOR UNTIL THEN. OKAY?
OH...
SEE THAT CLOCK?
IT'S WHEN THE SMALL HAND ON IT POINTS AT THE SIX
UHH_
EH? SIX?
SIX_ WHEN'S THAT?

OKAY, KOHARU-CHAN, BE A GOOD GIRL.
PLEASE LOOK AFTER HER FOR ME.
.....
G.P.P
HOW DO YOU PLAN ON SUPPORTING SOME OBNOXIOUS KID?
YOU'RE AN IDIOT, AREN'T YOU?
I... I DON'T THINK OF HER AS TROUBLE OR ANYTHING. AND SHE'S NOT OBNOXIOUS AT ALL. SHE'S WELL-BEHAVED AND ALWAYS SMILING.

EH...
I DON'T THINK I CAN TODAY
WE'RE GOING OUT TONIGHT
WE'RE GOING DRINKING WITH HAYASHIDA-SAN FROM ○△ DEPARTMENT STORE
DON'T DECIDE THAT ALL ON YOUR OWN!
KAZAMA!
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A WELL-BEHAVED KID...
WHAT, YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO DO?
IT'S FOR THE LADYBUG PRODUCT YOU CAME UP WITH
THEY'RE GOING TO THE TROUBLE OF STOCKING IT IN THEIR STORES
YOU HAVE TO GO
OH ALL RIGHT...
EIGHT O'CLOCK, AT THE REGULAR RESTAURANT
I'M SURE THIS WILL KEEP HAPPENING IN THE FUTURE
YES, SIR.
I CAN'T GET THIS UNSETTLED EVERY SINGLE TIME IT HAPPENS...

I HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE OFFICE AGAIN TONIGHT
WE CAN GO HOME NOW, BUT
OH
MASA-MUNE-KUN, ARE YOU DONE WITH WORK?
CAN WE GO HOME NOW?
UH YEAH ABOUT THAT
DASH
I PROBABLY WON'T BE BACK UNTIL AROUND TWELVE
DO YOU WANT TO GO TO GRANDMA'S NOW?
TWELVE? THAT'S WHEN THE SMALL HAND POINTS AT TWELVE?
YOU CAN'T SLEEP ALONE, CAN YOU?
WILL YOU REALLY BE OKAY?
EH... BUT...
UH... YEAH... THAT'S RIGHT...
OKAY. I'LL WAIT AT HOME, THEN!
YEAH.

HEY, KAZAMA!
MORE SAKE.
ASK FOR ANOTHER BOTTLE OF SAKE!
OKAY!
HA HA HA!
I'M SURE SHE'S ALREADY ASLEEP...
I DON'T WANT TO CALL AND WAKE HER UP...
tick...
tick...
tick...
tick...

BRR!
RING
BLINK
!
GOOD MORNING, MASAMUNE-KUN!
I'LL HELP YOU MAKE BREAKFAST!
!?
POP
SH-

UR~~~~~~GH
KOHARU-CHAN WAS PROBABLY STUNNED
THEY MADE ME DRINK AND AFTER THAT I CAN'T REMEMBER A THING...
WHAT TIME DID I COME HOME, AGAIN...?
SHIIIIT!
I'M AN UTTER FAILURE FROM DAY ONE!
KAZAMA-SAAAN, CALL ON LINE TWO
YES, HELLO?
Ah, Kazama-san!
CLACK!
HUH?
WHY...
It's... Kaharu-chan...!!
Koharu-chan fell from the slide, and she's hurt...!
We're having a doctor look at her right now...
_CAUSE PROBLEM AFTER PROBLEM?
WHY DO I..

THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY, IT'S ONLY A BUMP ON THE HEAD
SHE ALREADY WENT BACK TO PLAY AGAIN JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO..
Phew
ONLY...
...DOES SHE SEEM SLEEPY?
I HEARD THAT SHE FELL ASLEEP AT THE TOP OF THE SLIDE AND FELL...
EH...?
PLEASE FORGIVE ME, MA'AM.
EVEN AFTER I SAID THAT I WOULD TAKE CARE OF HER...
IT'S MY FAULT THAT THIS HAPPENED TO KOHARU-CHAN...
I'M SORRY...
I'VE MADE AN INEXCUSABLE OFFENCE TO YOUKO-SAN'S MEMORY BY THIS...
I'M SORRY, YOUKO-SAN
EVEN THOUGH... EVEN THOUGH YOUKO-SAN WORKED SO HARD ON HER OWN...
I'M SO... SO SORRY.
I'M SORRY...

S-
SORRY, KAZAMA-SAN
BUT YOU'RE...
chuckle chuckle
EH...?
PFFT!
EXACTLY LIKE YOUKO
IT'S ENOUGH, KAZAMA-SAN
YOUKO MADE SO MANY MISTAKES IN THE BEGINNING.
I... CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER HOW MANY TIMES SHE CALLED ME FOR HELP....
EVEN THOUGH SHE WAS SO PROUD THAT SHE DECIDED TO RAISE KOHARU ON HER OWN
SHE ALWAYS SAID HOW SHE COULD NEVER DO RIGHT BY YOU...
YOU'RE DOING YOUR BEST, AND THAT'S ENOUGH...
LOOK...
IT'S A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE SHE HAD, LOSING ONE OF HER PARENTS AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE, RIGHT?
..IT'S JUST ..

IN FRONT OF ME, SHE NEVER
TH-THAT CAN'T BE
THAT CHILD...
SHE'S ALWAYS ALONE WHEN SHE'S OUTSIDE
I THINK THAT, DEEP DOWN,
BUT JUST WAITED FOR YOU IN FRONT OF THE CLOCK...
SHE DIDN'T PLAY WITH ANYONE YESTERDAY
SHE REGARDS WAITING FOR YOU AND YOUKO AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING ELSE
IS WHAT WILL HELP MAMA MOST...
IF BEING QUIET AND WAITING..
BUT SHE MUST BE SCARED NOW...
SINCE THE FERSON SHE WAS WAITING FOR SUDDENLY DIDN'T COME BACK ONE DAY
SHE WAS SO SCARED,
SHE COULDN'T SLEEP...

I...
DIDN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT THAT...
THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD'VE KNOWN
YOU ONLY JUST MET...
BUT...
IT'S FINE IF YOU GET TO KNOW MORE ABOUT HER LITTLE BY LITTLE
TREASURING... AND CHERISHING ONE ANOTHER
ISN'T THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING?
IS IT REALLY OKAY...
FOR ME TO BE THE ONE TO RAISE HER?
YOU'LL UNDERSTAND IF YOU GO SEE HER
TAP...
K-
KOHARU-CHAN..

MASAMUNE-KUN!
WHAT'S WRONG!?
I'LL PUNISH THEM FOR YOU!
DID SOMEONE SAY SOMETHING MEAN TO YOU?
ARE YOU DONE WITH WORK?
CAN WE GO HOME NOW?
WHAT'S WRONG, MASAMUNE-KUN?
IT'S NOT SIX YET
DASH
IT'S FINE...
I'M ALL RIGHT.
END
THIS IS MY DAY...

I COME HOME WITH KOHAKU-CHAN,
AND UNTIL WE FALL ASLEEP,
WE TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED DURING OUR DAY, BE IT ONE THING, OR MANY
THAT'S MY NEW WAY...
OF SPENDING THE DAY...

THIS YEAR, TOO...
July
THIS MONTH HAS COME AGAIN...
I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN UNLUCKY IN JULY...
SINCE LONG AGO, WITHOUT FAIL

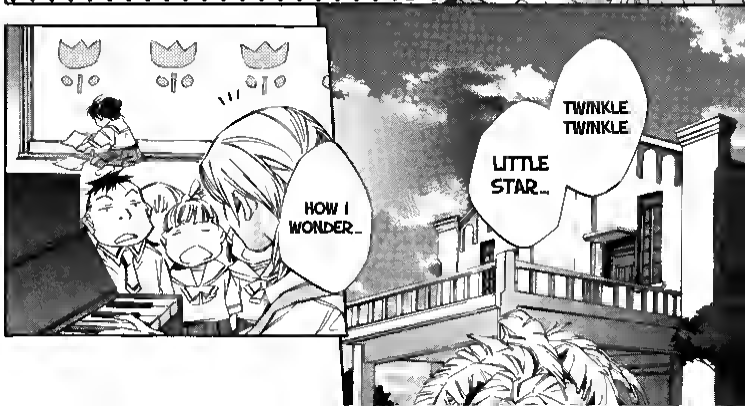
The 4th Day:
July Melancholy

MY GIRL

RETURNED GOODS?
ALL OF THESE...
Ha!
HOW COULD THIS SPOTTED LADYBUG MECHANICAL PENCIL POSSIBLY BE SOLD?
THAT RIGHT? BUT I EXPECTED THIS.
DESPITE THE GOOD CONSUMER RESPONSE
NOW, NOW DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT
THIS HAPPENS A LOT
BUT, WELL, DON'T EXPECT A SUMMER BONUS.
HA HA HA!
AS I EXPECTED...

LOOKS LIKE I'LL BE WORKING MORE OVERTIME
THIS IS BAD KOHAKU-CHAN'S VARIOUS SCHOOL EXPENSES
I WAS COUNTING ON GETTING A BONUS
KAZAMA!
STARTING TODAY YOU'LL BE WORKING OVERTIME WITH A SALES REP
SO THAT THE LADYBUG WILL SELL A BIT BETTER

'I GUESS, I DON'T EVEN NEED TO 'REQUEST' TO 'WORK' OVERTIME . . . .

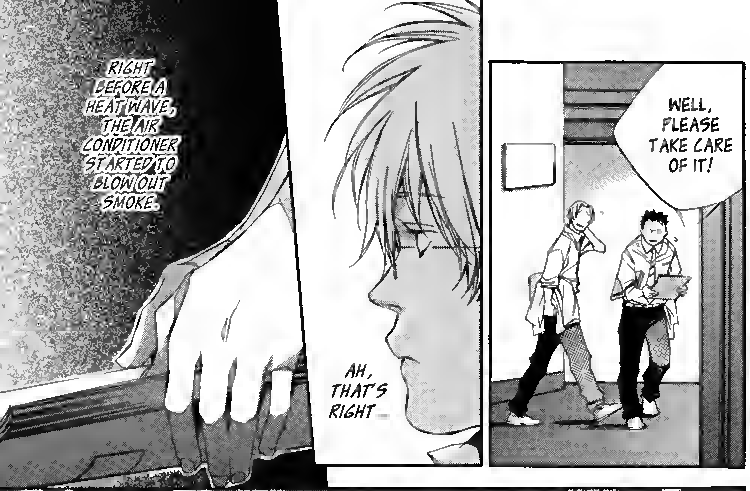

TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR...
HOW I WONDER...

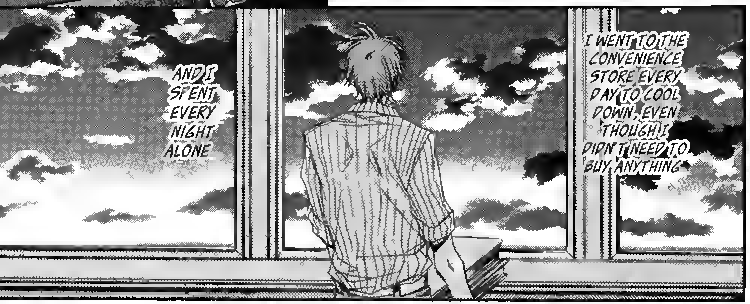
I'M SORRY, SENSEI
BUT THE FIRST SUNDAY IN JULY IS AN IMPORTANT DAY
WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT IT?
OH?
SO I HAVE TO DO THIS
KOHARU-CHAN WHAT'S WRONG? LET'S ALL SING TOGETHER
WHAT'S THIS?
IT'S A SECRET
EH? THAT'S TOO BAD
THAT DAY, YOU KNOW... IT'S THE DAY THAT MAMA TREASURED
THEN YOU WON'T TELL ANYONE?
IF YOU WON'T, THEN I'LL TELL YOU A TINY BIT
EVER SINCE WAY BEFORE I WAS BORN

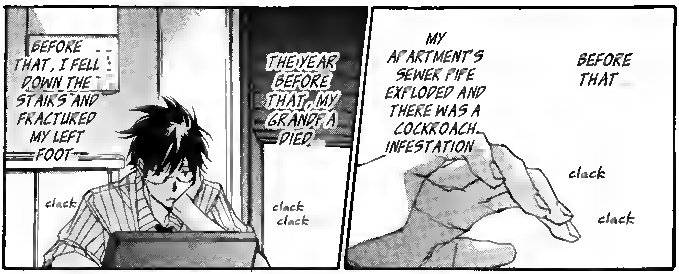
SO! I'LL DO IT STARTING JULY OF THIS YEAR.
IN MAMA'S PLACE...
I WILL...
T/N: IT IS CUSTOMARY TO ADDRESS YOUR SPOUSE'S PARENTS AS MOTHER/FATHER IN JAPAN.
DON'T WORRY. I'LL TAKE CARE OF KOHAKU-CHAN.
MASAMUNE-KUN WHY ARE YOU WORKING SUNDAY TOO?
THANK YOU, MOTHER...
SO, YOU'LL BE AWAY UNTIL SUNDAY? MUST BE DIFFICULT ...
I'M SORRY, KOHAKU-CHAN.
I MADE A HUGE MISTAKE AT WORK...
B- BUT...
UMM... SUNDAY IS... JULY 2ND IS...

A-... ALL RIGHT...
IT'S TOO BAD, KOHAKU-CHAN, BUT YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO HOUSE-SIT WITH ME
WELL THEN, PLEASE TAKE CARE OF HER FOR ME
VR MM...
WHAT'S THE MATTER, KOHAKU-CHAN?
?
JULY 2ND..
EH?
MIZUHOTO STATIONERY

NO KIDDING
I WANTED TO GET SUNDAY OFF AT LEAST
REALLY, IT SEEMS LIKE HE BIT OFF MORE THAN HE COULD CHEW
Hup!
GUYS WITH NO TALENT SHOULD STAY OUT OF IT
JULY LAST YEAR
H-
HEY!
WELL, WE'LL GO DO SOME OUTSIDE WORK
KAZAMA-SAN, CAN YOU SEND AN EMAIL TO THOSE PEOPLE IN THE FILE OVER THERE?
UH... UMM...
WHAT WAS IT...?
AH...


RIGHT BEFORE A HEAT WAVE, THE AIR CONDITIONER STARTED TO BLOW OUT SMOKE.
AH, THAT'S RIGHT...
WELL, PLEASE TAKE CARE OF IT!


AND I SPENT EVERY NIGHT ALONE
I WENT TO THE CONVENIENCE STORE EVERY DAY TO COOL DOWN, EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T NEED TO BUY ANYTHING.


BEFORE THAT, I FELL DOWN THE STAIRS AND FRACTURED MY LEFT FOOT.
clack
THE YEAR BEFORE THAT, MY GRANDPA DIED.
clack clack
MY APARTMENT'S SEWER PIPE EXPLODED AND THERE WAS A COCKROACH INFESTATION.
BEFORE THAT...
clack
clack

RRRING...
BEFORE THAT...
Later!
Click
doo—...
doo—...
Host-esses again
I forgot to send the data to Maruyama-san so take care of it for me!
Thank you very much for working so hard right up to your birthday!
Ah!
Masa-mune-kun!
SENPAI?
YES?
I FORGOT...
MY BIRTHDAY...
7
THAT'S RIGHT... TODAY IS...

YOU'RE GOING TO BE STUCK IN PREP SCHOOL ALL JULY?!
WHY!?
"WHY"? FOR THE TIME BEING I'M A STUDENT PREPARING FOR EXAMS.
OH, FINE!
?
Hmph!
Tch
?
CLANK
SCHOOL
BECAUSE BOTH OF MY PARENTS WORKED,
I DIDN'T HAVE ANY EXPERIENCE WITH THINGS LIKE BIRTHDAYS. EVER SINCE I WAS VERY YOUNG.
?
CHATTER
FOR SOMEONE LIKE ME, SHE...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
THAT'S REALLY POORLY WRITTEN, ISN'T IT?
WHO WROTE IT?
H...
HELLO?
Ha-
Happy birthday to you!

Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
.....
YOUKO-SAN, DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WERE BAD AT SINGING?
Shut up!
Haha...
BACK THEN, MY JULYS.
WERE HAPPY...

RRRING...
YES?
Oh! Kazama-kuuun! ♡ So you're still at work? ♡
AGAIN!?
clack
WELL... COULD YOU SEND THE DATA TO YOSHIDA-SAN TOO?
ALSO, I DIDN'T PUT HER ADDRESS IN MY COMPUTER...
SO COULD YOU GO AHEAD AND LOOK FOR IT YOURSELF?
Huh!?

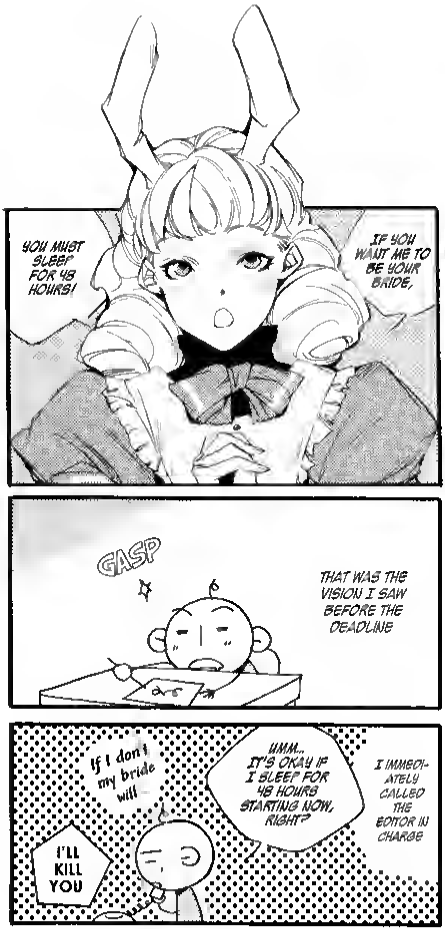
DIDN'T I PUT YOSHIDA-SAN'S BUSINESS CARD INSIDE MY BAG...?
Meh
WAH, IT'S SO MESSY!
Which one?
~~~~
This guy
Well, thanks for helping!
CLICK
doo ~
doo ~
FWAP
JEEZ, WHY AM I DOING THIS?
EH...?
I WONDER WHAT THIS IS..
~~~~

rrrring
Y-
YES?
Ah Kazama-kun! Come to think of it what time do you finish today?
Aren't you coming too?
CLACK
NO THANKS!
RRRING...
QUIT IT AL-...
CLACK

Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you...

HELLO?
I'M SORRY FOR BOTHERING YOU AT WORK, KAZAMA-SAN
BUT...
KOHARU-CHAN SAID IT HAD TO BE TODAY NO MATTER WHAT
IT'S...
OKAY
UMM...
THEY REALLY ARE...
MOTHER AND DAUGHTER AFTER ALL...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH...
I'll put Koharu-chan on.
AH... PLEASE DO...
Happy birthday
KOHARU

THIS DAY...
HELLO, MASAMUNE-KUN?
THE FIRST MEMORY OF IT THAT YOU GAVE ME...
JUST LIKE BACK THEN...
The end!
masamune-kun
koharu
mama
...HAS A VERY WARM FEELING.
Happy birthday ...


YOU MUST SLEEP FOR 48 HOURS!
IF YOU WANT ME TO BE YOUR BRIDE,
GASP
THAT WAS THE VISION I SAW BEFORE THE DEADLINE
I'LL KILL YOU
If I don't my bride will...
UMM... IT'S OKAY IF I SLEEP FOR 48 HOURS STARTING NOW, RIGHT?
I IMMEDIATELY CALLED THE EDITOR IN CHARGE

The 5th Day: Joy and Sorrow

BUS STOP
IT'S SUMMER VACATION
UWAH...
BZZZZZ BZZ BZZ...
RIGHT NOW, WE'RE HEADED TO MY GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE
THERE ARE ONLY TWO BUSES PER HOUR...?
KOHAKU-CHAN, I'M SORRY
WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT A WHILE WILL YOU BE OKAY?
YES.
THAT'S BECAUSE, A FEW DAYS AGO

I certainly do, but saying it that way...
UNTIL I DIE, YOU SAY...
And you still don't have a girlfriend, right? I wonder if you'll be able to marry...
Even though our neighbor Yamamoto-san already has grandchildren... Ah, we're so unlucky.
Your dad and I are busy with work, so we can't make it.
You have enough paid vacation to last until you die, right?
WHAT? MOM...
EH? THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF GRANDPA'S DEATH?
That's right. Anyhow, you're free, right?
A-
ABOUT THAT...
ACTUALLY I...
AHH! The train's here!
Well then, take care of your granny!
CLICK
WHAT THE... JEEZ...
doo—...
doo—...
What the hell?
Why am I surrounded by these kinds of people?

IF IT'S GRANDCHILDREN YOU WANT, YOU ALREADY HAVE ONE...
...BUT...
THUNK
THE PERSON I WANTED TO BE MY WIFE...
IS ALREADY GONE...
WAAAAH!

!
JEEZ, THIS KID
WAAH
I WANT SOME-THING TO DRINK!
MOOOM! I'M THIRSTY! WAAAAH
COME ON, DON'T CRY
WHICH ONE DO YOU WANT?
KOHARU...

COME ON, DON'T CRY...
KOHARU...
...MAMA...
OKAY, WAIT A MINUTE.
KOHARU-CHAN.
!
SHOULD WE GET SOMETHING TO DRINK TOO?
Y-
YEAH.
GLANCE

CLUCK
CLUCK
CLUCK
CLUCK

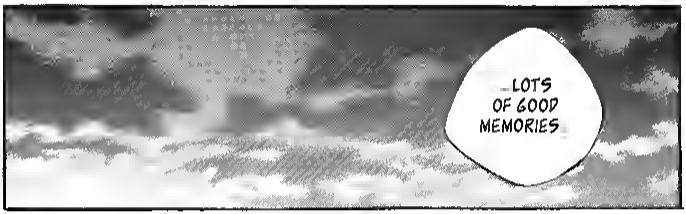
Graaaandma!
GRAAANDMA!
IT'S BEEN AWHILE!
GOOD HEAVENS! MASAMUNE!

OH MY!
ch-ching
CLUCK
CLUCK
CLUCK
CLUCK
I SEE. SO SHE'S YOUR DAUGHTER
YEAH
MY, MY, SHE'S LOVELY

I WISH I COULD'VE MET YOUKO-SAN...
BUT...
IT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY DIFFICULT FOR BOTH YOU AND THE GIRL
IT FEELS LIKE A LONG TIME HAS PASSED SINCE GRANDPA DIED...
BUT ARE YOU REALLY ALL RIGHT ON YOUR OWN, GRANDMA?
I'M FINE...
AFTER ALL, HE LEFT ME SO MANY GOOD MEMORIES...
LATELY... I'VE BEEN TRYING NOT TO THINK ABOUT YOUKO-SAN...

I DON'T THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO SUPPORT HER LIKE THIS
BECAUSE EVEN AFTER ALL THIS TIME, I DON'T HAVE ANY FAITH IN MY ABILITY TO TALK ABOUT YOUKO-SAN IN FRONT OF KOHARU-CHAN...
AND LOOK LIKE I'M ALL RIGHT
IF I COMPARE HOW THINGS WERE BACK THEN WITH NOW, I FIND MYSELF REGRETTING A LOT AND FEELING EMPTY
NO MATTER WHAT, I STILL END UP THINKING... THAT I'M LONELY
EVEN IF YOU'RE "ALL RIGHT," THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE NOT LONELY.
I WONDER WHY PEOPLE SUFFER LIKE THIS EVEN THOUGH... BOTH JOY AND SORROW ARE FLEETING THINGS THAT OCCUR EVERY DAY
IT'S ONLY NATURAL... TO FEEL LONELY AFTER THE ENJOYABLE MOMENTS PASS
BUT AS YOU EXPERIENCE NEW JOYS THOSE FEELINGS OF SORROW WILL START TO FADE.

IN THAT WAY,
YOU'LL BECOME HER SUPPORT IN LIFE
JOYFUL EXPERI-ENCES
WILL MAKE ALL THOSE FEELINGS OF LONELINESS WORTH IT
NO MATTER WHAT EXPRES-SION YOU WIND UP WEARING
YOU CAN TELL THAT GIRL ABOUT THE YOUKO-SAN YOU KNOW, MASAMUNE
AND THEN,
YOU CAN MAKE...


LOTS OF GOOD MEMORIES

GROOOWR!
WHOOOO!

THEN WHY DID YOU LAUGH?
I WAS SCARED, VERY SCARED

AHAHA!
Watermelon riind
HUH? YOU'RE NOT SCARED?
EVEN THOUGH GRANDMA WENT THROUGH THE TROUBLE OF MAKING IT FOR ME

HMM...
IF YOU DO THAT, YOU WON'T BE SCARED ANYMORE
WHEN I'M SCARED, I LAUGH ON PURPOSE

TH-
THEN
WH-
WHAT ABOUT WHEN YOU'RE LONELY?
YEAH...
TALKING TO OTHER PEOPLE MIGHT MAKE IT EASIER...
HMM... WHEN YOU'RE LONELY, HUH...?
SAYING YOU FEEL LONELY WHEN YOU'RE LONELY...
I-IN THE PAST, I JUST STAYED QUIET AND ENDURED IT,
BUT THAT WAS PROBABLY WRONG OF ME

I... I'M SORRY I DON'T REALLY KNOW
What am I saying?
EVEN THOUGH IT'S NIGHT, IT'S RATHER BRIGHT OUT.
THE MOON IS HANGING REALLY LOW TONIGHT, ISN'T IT?
MASAMUNE-KUN, CAN YOU REACH IT?
WITH YOUR HANDS
LET'S TAKE IT AND HAVE GRANDMA MAKE A MASK WITH IT!
ONE SCARIER THAN THE WATERMELON ONE!
UH...

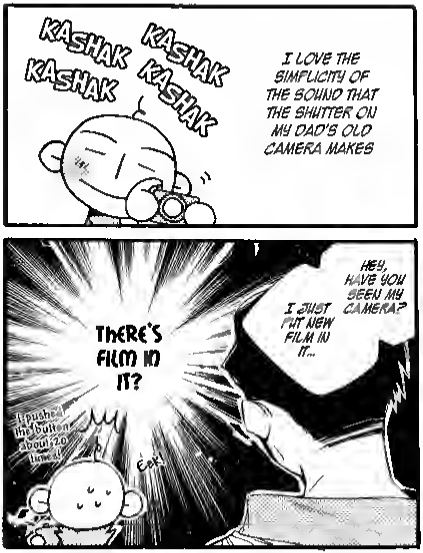
I JUST NEED TO REACH A LITTLE FURTHER
BUT IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE I CAN.
AHAHA!
THAT'S TOO BAD...
YEAH.
I WONDER WHY THERE ARE THINGS I CAN'T DO EVEN IF I TRY MY BEST...
HUH?
HEY, MASAMUNE-KUN...
W-... WELL, I... SOME-TIMES ...

I WANT...
I WANT TO SEE MAMA...
EVEN THOUGH BEING WITH MASAMUNE-KUN IS FUN...
I KNOW IT'S HOPELESS,
BUT I WANT TO SEE HER...
I WANT... TO SEE MAMA...
hic-
I WONDER WHY...
I WONDER WHAT I SHOULD DO...
hic-

I...
I WANT TO SEE HER TOO.
I-
I'M SORRY.
Ha
I'VE ALSO BEEN WONDERING WHAT I SHOULD DO ABOUT IT.
YOU WANT TO SEE MAMA TOO, MASAMUNE-KUN?
IT- IT'S PATHETIC OF ME, BUT
S- SO,
I HAVE A SUGGESTION.
I DON'T KNOW
ABOUT THE YOUKO-SAN FROM THE FIVE YEARS WE WERE APART, RIGHT?
SO WHEN I WANT TO SEE YOUKO-SAN
WILL YOU TELL ME ONE THING ABOUT THE YOUKO-SAN YOU KNOW, KOHARU-CHAN?
AND WHEN YOU WANT TO SEE HER,
I'LL TELL ONE THING ABOUT YOUKO-SAN FROM BEFORE YOU WERE BORN

WE'LL FEEL JUST A LITTLE BIT LESS LONELY, DON'T YOU THINK?
THAT WAY..
B-BUT WHAT IF I WANT TO SEE HER EVERYDAY?
WON'T WE RUN OUT OF THINGS TO TELL EACH OTHER?
Haha...
WE WON'T RUN OUT.
WHAT IF I ALWAYS WANT TO SEE HER?
BUT
THEN I'LL ALWAYS...
TALK ABOUT HER...

OKAY...
I GOT IT...


KASHAK
KASHAK
KASHAK
KASHAK
I LOVE THE SIMPLICITY OF THE SOUND THAT THE SHUTTER ON MY DAD'S OLD CAMERA MAKES
HEY, HAVE YOU SEEN MY CAMERA?
I JUST PUT NEW FILM IN IT...
THERE'S FILM IN IT?
I pushed the button about 20 times!!
Eek!

KRRRK KRRRK
KRRRK KRRRK
I LOVE THE SOUND OF WINDING UP MY DAD'S OLD CLOCK
Huh?
MIZU, COME HERE FOR A MINUTE!
The crank is missing!
Eeeek!

The 6th Day:
A True Father...

IT'S A NEW SEMESTER
PARENT MEETING
...-SAN
KAZAMA-SAN
Zzz
Zzz
Zzz
Zzz
KAZAMA-SAN!
HNN..
YES?
COULD YOU PLEASE KEEP YOURSELF FROM SNORING?
HUH?
Snor-..?

PARENT-MEETING
I.
I'M SORRY.
THIS HAS BEEN DRAGGING ON FOR THREE HOUR'S SINCE NOON
MOTHERS OF THIS GENERATION ARE PRETTY DIFFICULT
I WONDER IF HIS CHILD WILL BE OKAY, WITH A FATHER LIKE HIM...
!!!
EEH!?
BUT ISN'T HE A SINGLE FATHER?
Whisper
IT SEEMS THAT HE WAS A COLLEGE STUDENT UP UNTIL LAST YEAR

BY THE WAY, KAZAMA-SAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO PREPARE FOR EXAMS?
HUH?
WE'VE HAD OUR GIRL GO TO CRAM SCHOOL AND TAKE PIANO AND VIOLIN LESSONS
CHATTER
CHATTER
AND DO BALLET AND SWIMMING AS WELL
SHE'S HAD A PRIVATE TUTOR SINCE SHE WAS TWO
MUCH?
ARE YOU SAYING YOU HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT IT?
N-_NO, THAT'S_
SCOLDING, COMPARING, BRAGGING_
THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL DEBATE_
AS I THOUGHT, MOTHERS OF THIS GENERATION ARE PRETTY DIFFICULT_
I want to go home
sigh...
BUT LESSONS_?
I WONDER IF KOHAKU TOOK ANY WHILE SHE WAS ABROAD..

AH, BUT FIRST I SHOULD FIGURE OUT WHAT TO MAKE FOR DINNER
I'LL ASK KOHARU-CHAN WHEN WE GET HOME TODAY
AND I CERTAINLY HAVE TO THINK ABOUT UNIVERSITY, TOO
YESTERDAY WAS GINGER-FRIED
LET'S SEE
mumble mumble
KAZAMA-SAN!
-SAN
ARE YOU LISTENING TO WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING, KAZAMA-SAN?
Y-
YES
clank
clank
rattle rattle
WELL THEN, EVERYONE

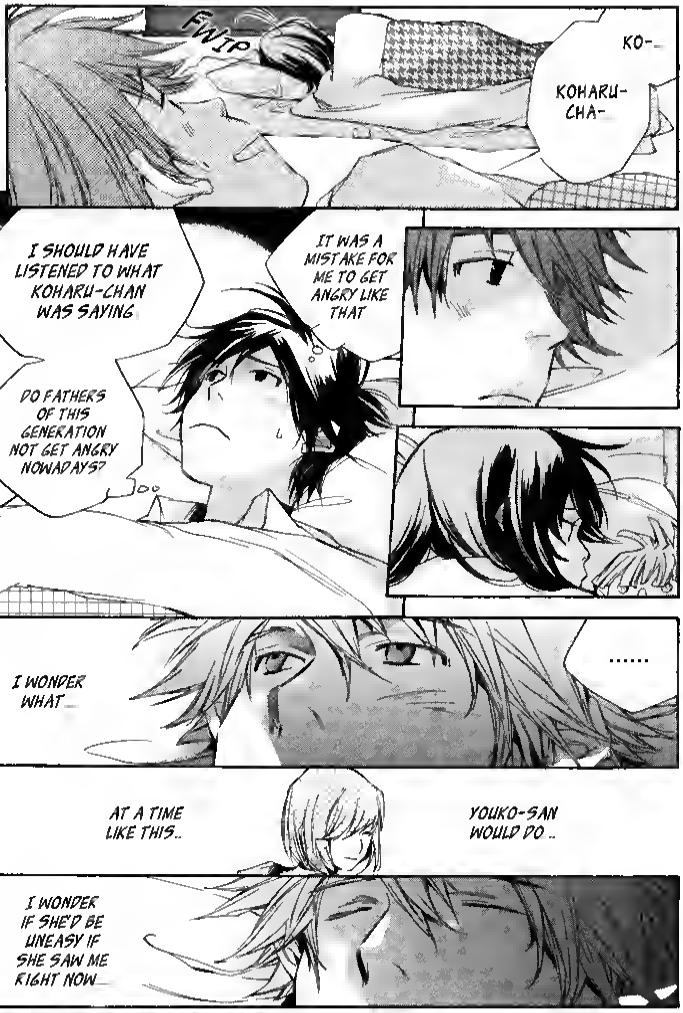
.....
YOUR PAPA IS SO LAME!
HMM? WHAT WAS THAT, SHUU-KUN?
HER PAPA DOZED OFF AND GOT SCOLDED!

MY PAPA IS TALL, AND SMART, AND HE'S A PUBLIC PROSECUTOR!
HE'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM MY PAPA!
Heh
GRR
HMPH
H-HAH!
YOUR MAMA, WHO CHOSE HIM, WASN'T MUCH EITHER, WAS SHE?
DIDN'T YOUR MAMA DOZE OFF AND DIE, TOO?

THUD THUD
SLIDE
I-. I'M SORRY I'M LATE,
KOHARU-CHA-...
...-N.
.....

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, BUT IT'S NOT GOOD TO FIGHT
KO-KOHAKU-CHAN...
SHOULD WE GO TOGETHER TOMORROW TO APOLOGIZE...?
EVEN IF SOMEONE SAYS MEAN THINGS TO YOU,
I STILL DON'T THINK IT'S OKAY TO RAISE YOUR HAND AGAINST SOMEONE...
...I'M NOT GOING
IT WASN'T MY FAULT.
BUT...

NO!
THAT WON'T DO.
I WON'T GO!
WE REALLY SHOULD GO
I HATE YOU WHEN YOU SAY THINGS LIKE THAT, MASAMUNE-KUN!
I HATE YOU TOO, WHEN YOU SAY THINGS LIKE THAT, KOHARU-CHAN!
GASP
SNIFF...
D-- DAMMIT
A sad distance


FWIP
KO-
KOHARU-CHA-
I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO WHAT KOHARU-CHAN WAS SAYING
IT WAS A MISTAKE FOR ME TO GET ANGRY LIKE THAT
DO FATHERS OF THIS GENERATION NOT GET ANGRY NOWADAYS?
I WONDER WHAT—
.....
AT A TIME LIKE THIS..
YOUKO-SAN WOULD DO ..
I WONDER IF SHE'D BE UNEASY IF SHE SAW ME RIGHT NOW—

SUCK
THE THE WEATHER IS NICE TODAY, ISN'T IT, KOHARU-CHAN?
chirp chirp
Guess it's no use huh ?
Good morning.
I'll leave him in your care.

AH...
UMM, YOU...
Meh
HMPH
YO.
GOOD MORNING, SHUU-KUN...
GOOD MORNING, SENSEI...
UMM... THE PARENTS OF THAT CHILD JUST NOW...
OH... YOU MEAN SHUU-KUN?
HIS PARENTS BOTH WORK...
HE OFTEN COMES ALONE IN THE MORNING...

WELL, REGARDLESS, IT SEEMS HIS MOTHER AND FATHER ARE SEPARATED.
SO NOW HE LIVES TOGETHER WITH HIS FATHER...
WELL, SINCE IT SEEMS LIKE HE WAS HURT IN THE FIGHT YESTERDAY,
I'D LIKE TO GET HIS FATHER'S CONTACT INFORMATION ...
THANK YOU.
OH, IN THAT CASE, PLEASE COME THIS WAY.

OH, MY— KAZAMA-SAN IS LATE TODAY..
tick tock
SHUU-KUN, THERE'S A PHONE CALL FROM YOUR PAPA
FROM PAPA!?
G-GIMME!
HELLO, PAPA?
HURRY!
YEAH YEAH
YEAH.

.....
OH...
OKAY...
SENSEI, PAPA IS GOING TO BE AT WORK LATE, SO I'M GOING HOME ALONE
OH? WILL YOU BE ALL RIGHT, SHUU-KUN?
YEAH.
GOOD-BYE.
.....

HIC
HIC HIC
WH-...
WHAT DO YOU WANT, THUG GIRL?
FWIP

IF YOUR DAD'S GOING TO BE LATE COMING HOME,
WHY DON'T YOU COME TO MY HOUSE?
WH-
WHY DO I HAVE TO GO TO YOUR LAME PAPA'S PLACE!?
I'M
THAT'S RIGHT, MY PAPA IS WAY COOLER!
I'M NOT...
LONELY AT ALL!
hicc-
IS REALLY GOOD AT HIS JOB
CAUSE, MY PAPA
hic-

hic-
PAPA IS...
AND... AND...
hic-
BAD, THIS IS BAD...
I'M SO LATE...
CREAK
!

WA
HOO
HI
WA
There there

The 7th Day: Unable to Say Sorry

WELL!
IT'S GREAT THAT THE TWO OF YOU MADE UP WITH EACH OTHER!
ALL RIGHT... LET'S WASH YOUR HAIR NOW AKI-KUN
ONCE YOU ACCEPT THAT YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING WRONG AND SAY SORRY YOU CAN MAKE UP WITH EACH OTHER
SPLASH
YUP!
N-... NO THANKS.
I ALWAYS WASH IT ON MY OWN
AND I'M NOT APOLOGIZING, EITHER

I'LL WASH YOUR BACK, MASAMUNE-KUN!
OH!
THANK YOU!
I... I SEE...
SCRUB SCRUB
THEN, I'LL WASH AKI-KUN'S BACK..
!
I... I SAID I CAN DO IT MYSELF!
GRR!
SCRUB SCRUB SCRUB
SCRUB SCRUB
....
COME, NOW, YOU'RE OUR GUEST TODAY..
Hahaha

I COOKED OMURICE* FOR DINNER TODAY
AKI-KUN, IS THIS OKAY? YOU DON'T DISLIKE OMURICE, DO YOU?
AND I DREW PICTURES OF AKI-KUN'S AND KOHARU-CHAN'S FACES ON THEM WITH KETCHUP!
IT
IT'S FINE
*OMURICE AN OMELETTE LAID OVER FRIED RICE
THEN, THIS ONE
..IS YOUKO-SAN'S
OH!
YOU DREW MAMA'S FACE TOO!
Ha ha ha!
DOES IT LOOK LIKE HER..?
YEAH
.....

EVEN THOUGH SHE'S GONE...
...
HUH?
...OH
YOU MEAN YOUKO-SAN?
—SHE'S STILL IMPORTANT TO YOU?
YES, SHE IS
SHE'S STILL VERY IMPORTANT TO ME
.....
HMM...

OH, DON'T WORRY. SOMETIMES HE'S BUSY WORKING AND DOESN'T EVEN COME HOME
I'VE CALLED BOTH YOUR HOUSE AND YOUR FATHER'S CELL PHONE, BUT I STILL ONLY GET THE ANSWERING MACHINE...
OH, THAT REMINDS ME
DING DONG
!
WHO COULD IT BE ..?
?
CREAK
CLACK
YES...
WHO IS IT?
!

EH...?
AKI!
MA-
I APOLOGIZE FOR COMING SO LATE.
WH-WHY ARE YOU HERE, MAMA!?
I WENT BACK TO THE HOUSE TO GET MY BAGS...
MAMA!
I'M...
AND I HEARD THE MESSAGE ON THE ANSWERING MACHINE SAYING YOU WERE HERE...
DID AKI-KUN'S MAMA AND PAPA MAKE UP?
HEY, MASA-MUNE-KUN, IS THAT AKI-KUN'S MAMA?
HMM, MAYBE...
I WAS SO SURPRISED! REALLY, WHAT ON EARTH IS HE DOING?
IN THE END, HE PUTS HIS JOB FIRST AND LEAVES YOU ALL ALONE...

I CAN'T TRUST HIM WITH YOU ANYMORE!
B-BUT MAMA...
!
AKI, COME WITH MAMA!
AH YOU...
ME-MEGUMI...

HEY! WHERE ARE YOU TRYING TO TAKE AKI!?
DON'T THINK YOU CAN JUST DO AS YOU PLEASE!
I CAN'T TRUST YOU WITH AKI
I'M TAKING HIM BACK WITH ME!
UM EXCUSE ME...
IT WAS YOUR FAULT I LEFT!
UH-UMM...
ME? WHAT ABOUT YOU!? WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING ALL THIS TIME!?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO LEFT! NOW YOU WANT TO JUST COME BACK AND—
SHUT UP!
EXCUSE ME...
EXCUSE ME! MY NAME IS KAZAMA MASAMUNE! MY DAUGHTER KOTARU GOES TO THE SAME KINDERGARTEN AS YOUR SON!
PLEASED TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE! BY THE WAY, I JUST HAVE ONE SMALL SUGGESTION!
CO-COULD WE PLEASE CONTINUE THIS DISCUSSION INSIDE?
.....

POUT
SO WOMEN...
...ONLY ACT LIKE A MOTHER WHEN IT'S CONVENIENT, HUH?
hmph..
WH-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S ALL TALK! HAVEN'T YOU BEEN NEGLECTING AKI?
M-
MASAMUNE-KUN...
IT-
IT'S ALL RIGHT, KOHAKU-CHAN

THAT'S MY LINE!
I'M ASHAMED OF MYSELF FOR EVER CHOOSING SOMEONE LIKE YOU!
MARRYING YOU WAS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE OF MY LIFE!
REALLY, YOU TWO! THIS DISCUSSION YOU'RE HAVING RIGHT NOW...
WHOSE SAKE IS IT FOR?
IS IT FOR YOURSELVES? FOR AKI-KUN?
!
ALTHOUGH YOU ARE HUSBAND AND WIFE, YOU ARE DIFFERENT PEOPLE.
YOU WON'T HAVE THE SAME OPINION ON EVERYTHING.
IF ALL YOU DO IS ARGUE WITHOUT TRYING TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, THEN YOU'LL ONLY HURT EACH OTHER.

RIGHT NOW YOU'RE TOO CLOSE TO EACH OTHER, SO YOU THINK YOU CAN SEE EVERYTHING.
BUT IN REALITY, SOMETIMES IT'S WHEN YOU'RE CLOSEST THAT YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING
SO THIS IS GOODBYE
I'M SORRY, MASAMUNE-KUN...
I'VE DECIDED TO STUDY ABROAD
I MISS YOU
I'M LONELY, MASAMUNE-KUN...
BUT...
I... I'VE ONLY BEEN A FATHER FOR HALF A YEAR...
WHY DON'T YOU CALM DOWN AGAIN AND TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND AT AKI-KUN?
SO I CAN'T REALLY CRITICIZE YOUR PARENTING
WHA...

YOU'VE ONLY BEEN A FATHER FOR HALF A YEAR? WHAT COULD YOU POSSIBLY KNOW?
THAT'S RIGHT! STOP MAKING ASSUMPTIONS AND LOOKING DOWN ON US
AKI IS ALREADY FIVE HE UNDER-STANDS OUR SITUATION
WE KNOW QUITE WELL WHAT'S IMPORTANT WITHOUT YOU TELLING US
I DON'T WANT TO BE LECTURED BY SOMEONE WHO HAS BARELY RAISED A CHILD
B-BUT...
MASAMUNE IS A GOOD PAPA!

AKI-KUN?
EH...
EVEN THOUGH KOHARU'S MAMA IS FAR AWAY IN HEAVEN, MASAMUNE STILL TREASURES HER
NOT LIKE PAPA AND MAMA, WHO AREN'T HAPPY ABOUT BEING NEAR EACH OTHER
EVEN THOUGH HE'S A MAN...
HE'S A REALLY GOOD COOK
EVERYDAY AT 6 O'CLOCK,
HE RUNS TO PICK KOHARU UP FROM DAY CARE
AND IF HE'S EVEN A LITTLE LATE, HE'LL SAY SORRY
HE'LL APOLOGIZE TO KOHARU A LOT

MASAMUNE TAUGHT ME THAT...
ONCE YOU ACCEPT THAT YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING WRONG AND SAY YOU'RE SORRY,
YOU CAN MAKE UP WITH EACH OTHER.
THAT'S WHY...
THAT'S WHY I'M TEACHING IT TO PAPA AND MAMA TOO!

AKI-
KU...
AKI...
IT'S NOT LIKE THEY FIGHT ALL THE TIME
PAPA AND MAMA ARE BOTH REALLY NICE PEOPLE
BUT TODAY I'LL APOLOGIZE, SO PLEASE LET THIS GO
I'M SORRY, MASAMUNE!

I'M SORRY ...
.....

I WONDER IF AKI-KUN'S PAPA AND MAMA WILL APOLOGIZE TO EACH OTHER AND MAKE UP
HEY MASA-MUNE-KUN
WE'LL SEE...
BUT
WHEN YOU GET OLDER, YOU END UP NOT BEING ABLE TO SAY THE ONE THING YOU WANT TO...
PROBABLY BECAUSE AS YOU EXPERIENCE MORE THINGS, YOU GROW GREEDIER IN SPITE OF YOURSELF...
AND BECOME LESS CONSIDERATE OF OTHER PEOPLE'S FEELINGS
HOW COME?

I'M NO GOOD I COULDN'T SAY IT EITHER
THAT'S WHY AKI-KUN AND KOHARU-CHAN ARE REALLY GREAT!
WHAT ABOUT MASA-MUNE-KUN?
I WONDER WHY COULDN'T I BELIEVE IN YOU BACK THEN

The 7th Day.FIN

MY THROAT WAS HOARSE. I FELT FEVERISH.
COUGH COUGH
I WAS TOLD TO DRINK SAKE TO STERILIZE MY THROAT
Ugh
HERE, CHUG THIS DOWN.
It hurts!
It hurts!
IT BURNED ALL THE WAY DOWN TO MY STOMACH...

AT LEAST LET US KNOW BEFOREHAND IF YOU'RE GOING TO COME HOME!
OKAY, BUT...
...I JUST CAME OVER TO BORROW DAD'S CAMERA.
KAZAMA
KOHARU-CHAN?
OH MY! DID YOU FINALLY GET A GIRLFRIEND?
IF YOU'D LIKE, WHY DON'T YOU AND DAD COME TOO?
KOHARU-CHAN IS IN THE PLAY AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY THIS WEEKEND.
HUH?
SHE'S MY DAUGHTER.
Haha
THAT'S NOT IT.

MY GIRL

BA
I NEED TO PICK UP KOHARU-CHAN FROM KINDERGARTEN, SO I'M HEADING HOME!
M
JUST A MINUTE, MASAMUNE!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
I'M HOME
ARE YOU AN IDIOT!?
YOU DIDN'T EVEN CONSULT ME ABOUT SOMETHING THIS IMPORTANT!?
I WAS PLANNING ON TELLING YOU ABOUT IT, BUT YOU ALWAYS HANG UP ON ME BEFORE I CAN GET TO IT!
STOMP
STOP RIGHT THERE MASAMUNE!
ST
STOM
BYE.
DAD, I'M BORROWING YOUR DIGITAL CAMERA
HUH?
HEY...
H-
? ?
H-
HONEEEY
BA
JUST A-...
M

YOU'RE BEING AWFULLY FLIPPANT ABOUT IT...
Ha ha ha...
WOW, THAT'S A SURPRISE
OH...
MASAMUNE HAS A KID...
I THOUGHT I HAD RAISED A KID WITH COMMON SENSE...
...IT FEELS LIKE I'VE BEEN BETRAYED
WELL, I GUESS I'LL GO TOO, THEN
SINCE YOU PUSH YOUR OPINIONS ON OTHER PEOPLE TOO MUCH SOMETIMES
I COULDN'T EVEN ASK ABOUT THE WOMAN HE HAD THE CHILD WITH
AT ANY RATE, I'M GOING TO MASAMUNE'S TOMORROW TO SEE WHAT HE HAS TO SAY ABOUT THIS.

BUT...
ISN'T IT A PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CORRECT THE MISTAKES THEIR CHILDREN MAKE?
IT'S PROBABLY A LITTLE TOO EARLY TO BE DECIDING THAT THIS IS A MISTAKE
OH?
SUDDENLY HAVING TO TAKE CARE OF A 5-YEAR-OLD KID AT ONLY 23?
THERE'S NO WAY IT COULD BE ANYTHING BUT A MISTAKE
WELL, WE'LL GO AND SEE TOMORROW
DON'T YOU THINK WE SHOULD HOLD OFF MAKING JUDGMENTS UNTIL THEN?
TSUKAMOTO

MY, MY, HOW CHARMING...
MASAMUME-SAN REALLY IS HANDY
THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME BORROW YOUR SEWING MACHINE
MY MOTHER IS TERRIBLE WITH THIS SORT OF THING, SO SHE DOESN'T HAVE ONE...
LOOK, LOOK, GRANDMA! DO I LOOK LIKE A REINDEER?
IT'S NO PROBLEM
MORE IMPORTANTLY, YOU WENT TO YOUR PARENTS' HOUSE TODAY, DIDN'T YOU?
HOW DID IT GO?
I'D ALSO LIKE TO VISIT TO MEET THEM ONCE, BUT...

WELL THAT... THAT IS...
I'M AFRAID WE HAD A LITTLE FIGHT
MY MOTHER IS NARROW-MINDED. YOU COULD SAY...
SHE'S THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO DOESN'T SHOW ANY UNDERSTANDING FOR ANYONE'S OPINIONS OTHER THAN HER OWN
OH MY. THAT'S TERRIBLE...
N-NO
IT'S ALWAYS THAT WAY
WE CAN JUST LEAVE HER ALONE AND THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY PROBLEM
B-BUT...
DON'T SIT SO CLOSE TO THE TV!
IT'S BAD FOR YOUR EYES
Eek!
AH!

I CAN SAY THIS NOW, SINCE IT'S AFTER THE FACT...
...BUT I WAS ALSO VERY OPPOSED TO A LOT OF THINGS YOUKO DID...
!!!
YES?
SAY, KAZAMA-SAN
GRADUALLY TIME PASSED,
AND WHEN I FINALLY FELT LIKE TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THINGS FROM HER POINT OF VIEW...
...SHE WAS ALREADY GONE...
I DON'T WANT YOU OR YOUR MOTHER...
...TO HAVE ANY REGRETS...
PLEASE DON'T SAY SAD THINGS LIKE "LEAVE HER ALONE."
EVEN SO...
I GUESS PARENTS ARE PIG-HEADED WHEN IT COMES TO THEIR OWN CHILDREN
IT'S TERRIBLE, ISN'T IT...

REGRETS, HUH...?
HA...
OH, KAZAMA
DID YOU BUY A CAMERA? NICE!
NO, IT'S MY DAD'S.
...AT ANY RATE,
DIGITAL CAMERAS NOWADAYS
IT'S GOT SO MANY FUNCTIONS THAT I CAN'T EVEN FIGURE OUT HOW TO USE IT
OH,
IS YOUR DAD A CAMERAMAN?
I'm jealous!
HE'S A POOR PHOTOGRAPHER
KAZAMA-SAN!
THERE ARE VISITORS WAITING FOR YOU IN THE LOBBY!

I... I'M SORRY, MASA-MUNE
WE'LL MAKE THIS QUICK, SO...
YOU DON'T NEED TO APOLOGIZE, DEAR...
HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ISSUE
DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH TROUBLE YOUR RASH DECISIONS ARE CAUSING FOR PEOPLE AROUND YOU...?
I KNOW.
HAVING YOUR SON BE AN UNMARRIED FATHER
AS CONCERNED WITH APPEARANCES AS YOU ARE, I'M SURE IT BOTHERS YOU
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN!
YOU WERE A COLLEGE STUDENT UNTIL JUST RECENTLY. I'M SAYING IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO BE A FATHER.

I WONDER WHAT THE WOMAN YOU'RE WITH IS THINKING
HAVING CHILDREN JUST AS YOU PLEASE IS IRRESPONSIBLE
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO CALL YOU SOFT-HEARTED OR A BLOCKHEAD, ENDING UP TAKING CARE OF A CHILD LIKE THAT
THINK ABOUT YOUR OWN HAPPINESS!
WHA
GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE, THEN WORK AT A COMPANY
...PASSING THE YEARS LIKE THAT, THEN GETTING MARRIED AND HAVING A FAMILY?
WHAT'S YOUR IDEA OF "HAPPINESS"?
YOU THINK THAT IF SOMEONE STRAYS FROM THE ORDINARY PATH, THEY'LL BE COMPLETELY MISERABLE...
...BUT I THINK YOU'RE WRONG.

BUT...
WHAT KIND OF PARENT WOULD ENCOURAGE HER OWN SON TO GO THROUGH HARDSHIPS WHEN HE DOESN'T HAVE TO?!
I WON'T SAY IT'S NOT HARD
BUT
THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL MAKE SOMEONE HAPPY IS THAT PERSON THEMSELF
THAT... THAT'S ENOUGH
TELL ME THE ADDRESS OF THAT GIRL YOU'RE WITH
MM
!
YOU CAME HERE WITHOUT EVEN ASKING ME THAT...
DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE THE ONE BEING RASH?
I'M NOT GETTING ANYWHERE WITH YOU
I'LL GO MAKE A COMPLAINT TO HER

YOU'RE FREE TO SPECULATE AS YOU WILL, BUT YOU'LL REGRET IT
LIKE I DID...
I DON'T THINK...
...THERE'S ANY ONE RIGHT WAY FOR A PERSON TO LIVE THEIR LIFE.
...IF... ...YOU'RE ASKING ME IF I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE LIFE I'VE CHOSEN
...THE ANSWER IS, I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NONE...

MOM, DID YOU KNOW?
I APPRECIATE YOUR WARNINGS...
...BUT IF JUST ONCE YOU WOULD SAY, "IT'S ALL RIGHT..."
...WITH THAT ALONE, WE'LL BE ABLE...
...TO LIVE THE LIFE WE'VE CHOSEN WITH PRIDE.
AH, THANK YOU.
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.
BOO
THE SECTION CHIEF IS CALLING YOU!
KAZAMA!

SORRY, I HAVE TO HEAD BACK
LET'S TALK AGAIN LATER
YEAH...
COME TO THINK OF IT, WHICH CAMERA WAS IT...
HUFF
...THAT MASAMUNE TOOK?
WELL... PROBABLY...
THE SILVER DIGITAL CAMERA, I THINK?

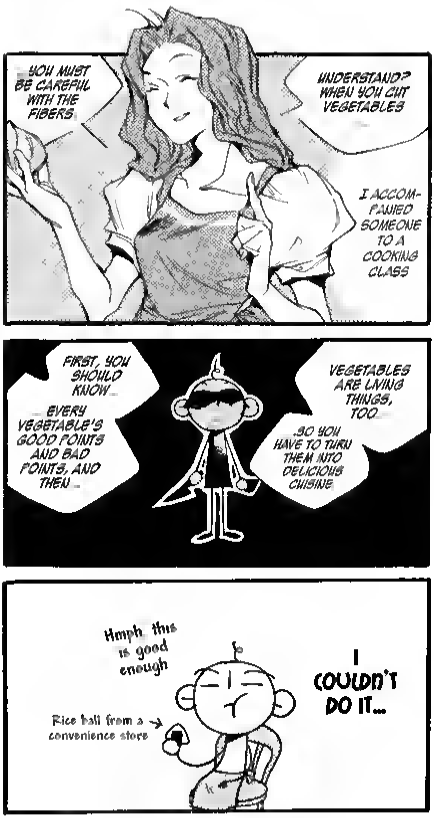
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT...
OH, THAT'S NO GOOD
IT'S HAS A LOT OF FARTS BUT IT DOESN'T WORK THAT WELL
A SINGLE-LENS REFLEX CAMERA THAT USES FILM WOULD BE THE BEST
HE WENT THROUGH ALL THAT TROUBLE JUST SO HE COULD PHOTOGRAPH HIS GIRL, RIGHT?
OH, I KNOW. YOU SHOULD TAKE THE PICTURES FOR HIM.
NO
YOU KNOW I'M CLUMSY WITH THINGS LIKE THAT. ARE YOU BEING SARCASTIC?
ME!?
I'M NOT BEING SARCASTIC
RUSTLE
Here
DID YOU FORGET SOMETHING?
MASAMUNE'S FIRST SPORTS MEET
YOU TOOK THIS PICTURE

I FOUND IT YESTERDAY WHEN I WAS TIDYING UP...
BACK THEN, WE WERE TWO ADULTS,
WRAPPED AROUND THE FINGER OF A FOUR-YEAR-OLD BOY
SEARCHING FOR THE BEST WAY TO RAISE A CHILD...
BEFORE I KNEW IT...
Sigh...
...HE WAS ALREADY THIS GROWN UP...

THAT'S RIGHT...
IF THE BOY SAYS HE'S HAPPY...
...THEN SHOULDN'T THAT BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR US?
BUT...
.....
.....

I WONDER...
Gaaz
IF I CAN GET BETTER AT TAKING PICTURES...
...IN TIME FOR THE CHRISTMAS PARTY THIS WEEKEND?
IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT...
...LET'S PRACTICE TOGETHER

The 8th Day·FIN


YOU MUST BE CAREFUL WITH THE FIBERS
UNDERSTAND? WHEN YOU CUT VEGETABLES
I ACCOMPANIED SOMEONE TO A COOKING CLASS
FIRST, YOU SHOULD KNOW...
...EVERY VEGETABLE'S GOOD POINTS AND BAD POINTS, AND THEN...
VEGETABLES ARE LIVING THINGS, TOO...
...SO YOU HAVE TO TURN THEM INTO DELICIOUS CUISINE
Hmph this is good enough
Rice ball from a convenience store
I COULDN'T DO IT...

The 9th Day: Clumsy Camera

17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29
nanami-chan's christmas party
COUGH
COUGH
COUGH
WELL, LET'S AT LEAST GO TO THE DOCTOR
wheeze
wheeze
Y-YEAH. BUT IF WE GO, WE'LL END UP BEING LATE
DON'T FORCE YOURSELF, MASAMUNE-KUN
I CAN GO ALONE
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
B-BUT TODAY IS YOUR SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PARTY
wheeze
wheeze

THEN I'LL GO AHEAD WITH GRANDMA
COME WHEN YOU CAN...
OKAY?
ARE... ...YOU SURE...?
WHEEZE WHEEZE
I'M SORRY, KOHARU-CHAN
What?
You have a cold too!?
I MUST HAVE GIVEN IT TO YOU THE LAST TIME YOU CAME OVER. I'M SORRY
So I thought I'd stay at home today, but...
It would be terrible if I gave it to Koharu-chan, too.
Y-YEAH
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

WHAT...
SNEEZE
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
IS GRANDMA SICK TOO?
Wheeze Wheeze
Y-YEAH
AH, GEEZ IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
AMA
FWAP
I'M GOING TO BE TAKING PICTURES OF A ROWDY 9-YEAR-OLD GIRL.
BUT EVEN MY STILL-LIFE SHOTS ARE OUT OF FOCUS!
Look at these!
000

WHY ARE YOU SO SET ON USING FILM? YOU CAN'T RETAKE SHOTS ON FILM
THERE ARE DIGITAL SINGLE-LENS REFLEX CAMERAS, RIGHT?
I WANT TO USE THE DIGITAL CAMERA
THAT'S NOT TRUE
THESE ARE NICE PHOTOS...
HMM?
ONE OF THE JOYS OF TAKING PICTURES IS NOT KNOWING EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF PHOTOGRAPH YOU'RE TAKING
BUT THEN YOU PUT IT IN SOME DEVELOPING SOLUTION
AND GRADUALLY, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE THE PICTURE
OF COURSE YOU'LL MAKE MISTAKES, TOO, BUT SOMETIMES YOU COME ACROSS SOMETHING GOOD...
SOMETHING BETTER THAN YOU EVER EXPECTED

I HAVE A BUSINESS TRIP TO GO ON
SORRY
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO ENJOY BEING AN AMATEUR
PLEASE, YOU TAKE THE PHOTOS AT TODAY'S CHRISTMAS PARTY
HUH?
BRRRIIING...
YOU NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT...
H-... HOLD ON!
I'm not running away but
AH, MASAMUNE?
HELLO?
KAZAMA RESIDENCE
FLICK
YOU'RE PUSHING THE ENTIRE PARENT-CHILD PROBLEM ON TO ME TO DEAL WITH BY MYSELF AND RUNNING AWAY?

EH?
OH NO! YOU HAVE A COLD?
YES, I'M GOING
B-BUT IT TURNS OUT YOUR FATHER
HUH?
WHAT'D YOU JUST SAY?
wheeze wheeze
COUGH COUGH
ALL RIGHT THEN. I'M SORRY, KOHARU-CHAN.
AFTER I GO TO THE HOSPITAL, I'LL HEAD STRAIGHT OVER, SO...

COUGH COUGH
wobble
PLEASE TAKE CARE OF HER, MOM...
GRUMPY
mutter
...IT'S JUST LIKE I SAID!
I WARNED HIM THAT HE COULDN'T BE A GOOD FATHER...
mutter
!
I...
I'M SORRY...

I-I HEARD YOU'RE DOING A PLAY TODAY, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.
WHAT'S YOUR ROLE?
YES!
I'M A REINDEER...
UH... UMM, YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE!
ER... ERM, YOUR NAME IS KOHAKU-CHAN, RIGHT?
A REINDEER!?
YOU MEAN, LIKE THE REINDEER THAT PULL SLEDS?
Y-YES
THEY SHOULD'VE HAD A BOY DO THAT.
DID THE TEACHER F*CK YOUR ROLE? I WONDER WHAT SHE WAS THINKING.
N-NO.
I WANTED TO DO IT...
OH...
OH, I SEE, DEAR ME... I... I'M SORRY...

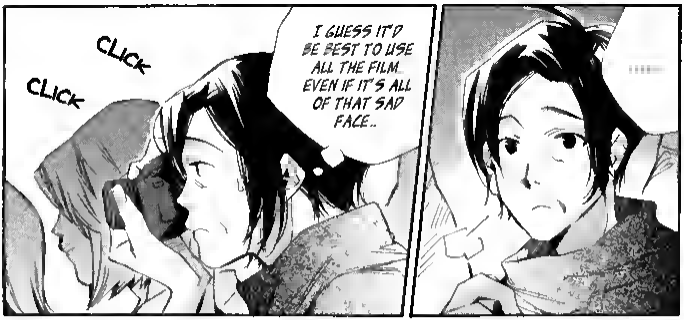
SIGH...
IT'S... AWKWARD...
...
That concludes the Cherry Class's play.
CLAP CLAP
Next up... ...the Strawberry Class's play.
GASP
FUME
MASAMUNE IS LATE...
FUME
WHAT COULD BE TAKING HIM SO LONG?

MASAMUNE-KUN MADE IT FOR ME
OH, MY, OH.. WHAT A CUTE COSTUME
WHERE DID YOU BUY IT?
OH, REALLY?
Really
COME TO THINK OF IT, THAT SORT OF THING IS ALL HE'S EVER REALLY BEEN GOOD AT
D-DON'T WORRY... MASAMUNE WILL COME SOON
Well he's always slow
MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHEN THE CHRISTMAS PARTY IS OVER, LET'S GO SHOPPING TO GET YOU A CHRISTMAS PRESENT, KOHARU-CHAN
M-
I WONDER WHAT YOU'D LIKE
.....

OH?
WHAT DID YOU GET?
That's too bad...
SANTA ALREADY GAVE ME MY PRESENT FOR THIS YEAR...
MASAMUNE-KUN!

dash
WELL, I'M OFF, MASAMUNE-KUN'S MAMA
OH
STRAWBERRY CLASS, PLEASE GATHER AROUND!
G-
GOOD LUCK, KOHARU-CHAN!
Well now—
let's hurry up and hand out these presents.

Let's go, reindeer!


CLICK
CLICK
I GUESS IT'D BE BEST TO USE ALL THE FILM, EVEN IF IT'S ALL OF THAT SAD FACE..

TWITCH

SHE'S A GOOD GIRL, THAT KOHARU-CHAN...
HER MOTHER MUST BE A KIND WOMAN. IT WOULD BE NICE TO MEET HER...
YOU WERE A HUGE HELP TODAY.
THANK YOU, MOM.
I'M AFRAID...
...THAT SHE WAS IN AN ACCIDENT LAST SPRING..
EH...?
THE FIRST THING I GAVE HER WAS A CHEAP LADYBUG ERASER I MADE...
IT MADE HER REALLY HAPPY,
SO I MADE THEM THE NEXT DAY, AND THE NEXT...

AH!
THE OTHER DAY, WHEN I WAS MAKING KOHARU-CHAN'S COSTUME
I WENT TO HER GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE TO BORROW THE SEWING MACHINE
I WAS REALLY SURPRISED...
SHE...
HAD SAVED AND TREASURED ALL OF THOSE ERASERS
I WAS SO SELF-CENTERED...
SHE SUDDENLY DECIDED TO STUDY ABROAD... AND WHILE I WAS CLINGING TO THIS ONE-SIDED RESENTMENT TOWARDS HER FOR LEAVING ME...
YOU KNOW, MOM, I NEVER KNEW...
I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT MY OWN CHILD OR HER FEELINGS UNTIL SHE WAS GONE...
SHE WAS RAISING KOHARU-CHAN ALONE IN A FOREIGN LAND..

EVEN THOUGH SHE'S JUST A CHILD, SHE'S ALWAYS WATCHING OUT FOR ME
KOHARU-CHAN IS ALMOST TOO GOOD OF A GIRL
WHENEVER I REALIZE THIS, I FEEL MORE AND MORE MISERABLE
I MEAN, EVEN TODAY, SHE DIDN'T ASK FOR ANYTHING OR SAY A SINGLE SELFISH THING
IF I CAN EVER BECOME A PROPER FATHER
I WONDER
WHO KNOWS? BUT IT LOOKS LIKE, TO KOHARU-CHAN, YOU'RE THE PERFECT FATHER
YOU'LL BE FINE.

YEAH
THANKS
MASAMUNE-KUN!
IS YOUR COLD ALL RIGHT?
YEAH
I TOOK SOME MEDICINE, SO I'M FINE NOW.
OH, GOOD!

YEAH, SURE.
HEY, YOU KNOW WHAT?
THEY SAID IT'S OKAY TO TAKE AN ORNAMENT FROM THE TREE
WHY DON'T WE GO GET ONE?

THAT'S NOT TRUE.
NONE OF THEM ARE VERY GOOD..
TSB
OH.
OH, MY..!

My Girl ① END

The 9th Day . FIN

Pleasure To Live With You...
To The 10th Day...

Afterword

I FEEL VERY GLAD AND THANKFUL I GOT THE CHANCE TO DO A BOOK LIKE THIS. IT'S UNSKILLED, ROUGH, AND HASN'T BEEN CONCLUDED YET, BUT IF EVEN A TINY BIT OF IT STAYS WITH YOU, I'LL BE HAPPY.

TO EVERYONE WHO TOOK THE TIME TO GIVE ME THEIR OPINIONS, TO MY MANAGER WHO SUPPORTED ME, AND TO EVERYONE I'VE BECOME INDEBTED TO WHILE MAKING THIS BOOK, I THANK YOU.

SAHARA MIZU, MARCH 2007

MY GIRL

LELEI

DELILARYN

KALENDEL

MY GIRL

SAYAKA MIZU

LELEI

DELILARYN

KALENDEL

HTTP://DEMINILAWEN.NL/

MY GIRL

SAYAKA MIZU

LELEI

DELILARYN

KALENDEL

HTTP://DEMINILAWEN.NL/

MY GIRL

SAYAKA MIZU

LELEI

PERSIMMONS

DELILARYN

KALENDEL

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HTTP://STORMINHEAVEN.NET

MY GIRL

SAYAKA MIZU

&

LELEI

PERSIMMONS

DELILARYN

KALENDEL

MY GIRL

SAYAKA MIZU

&

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&

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MY GIRL

SAKURA MIZU

LELEI

FUJI

DELILARYN

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MY GIRL

SAYAKA MIZU

&

LELEI

PERSIMMONS

DELILARYN

&

KALENDEL

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